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PORTLAND

# Spectator

Volume 8, Issue 8, May 2010

MAGAZINE

now  
**What?**

## ASPSU Gets To Start Over

Katie Markey and her Students First coalition promise transparency and teamwork. But it's never that easy.

### What Now, ASPSU?

By Jonathan Miles

### Votes are in. Promises are out.

By Danielle Kulczyk

The Portland Spectator believes that the academic environment should be an open forum, where there is a chance for rational and prudent conservative arguments to be heard. We encourage the expression of diverse ideology to promote thought-provoking discussions.

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Photo by Nate Garvison

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The Portland Spectator accepts letters to the editor and commentaries from students, faculty and staff at Portland State University. Please limit your letters to 300 words when possible.

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## Letter From the Editor

Dear Readers,

It was Steve Clark, publisher of the Portland Tribune, who said that a news organization needs to serve as an independent, public institution—one that plays a very important role in our democracy. Mr. Clark was speaking to PSU's student media editors during our orientation in September, and it struck me as an especially important point. Every niche public, in this case Portland State campus, needs its own fresh, independent examination of current events, government policies, and political thought.

The Spectator, I can safely say, is now a solid, reliable PSU community institution. I don't mind bragging a bit, because the staff here deserves it. We've had a phenomenal year by just about every measure a news magazine like ours can be measured: we've had a stable, talented staff; we've investigated and broken important stories; we've put the heat on those in power at every turn; we've offered thought-provoking political arguments; and we've done it all in an attractive, original design.

When we started this year, we knew demand for a magazine like this one existed—I just didn't think it would go so well. Now, our staff is preparing to transition for next year. The new editor, Jonathan Miles, is talented and dedicated to the ideals of this institution. I know his leadership will continue to provide the original news and thinking that you have come to expect.

The biggest thanks goes to you—our readers who have followed us each month this year. Your support and encouraging words have kept us going on those long production nights when we're asking ourselves: why are we doing this? For me, the answer has been: to be the local news and commentary organization that I've always wanted to read. I hope you agree, and continue to reading the Spectator next year.

Sincerely,

Joe Wirthheim  
Editor-in-Chief



Find more online:

[www.portlandspectator.org](http://www.portlandspectator.org)

# NEWS

## The Portland Tribune

has a little reefer madness lately with consecutive articles about the legal use of marijuana in Oregon ["A Growth Industry?" April 15, 2010 and "An Ounce of Cure?" April 29, 2010]. Both articles note that voters might have a chance to choose between two reforms to the currently failing medical marijuana system in

Oregon. The likelier choice, according to the Tribune, will be a California-esque dispensary market controlled by the state like liquor stores are today. Another option would be to simply decriminalize pot altogether. Both proposals are working their way toward the November ballot.

## The May primaries

are coming up fast. Just when you thought it was safe to turn off your brain, the Oregon primary election sneaks up and bites you in the...end. Not only will you have to choose a primary gubernatorial candidate for the November general election, but on May 18, City Commissioners, Metro Council Members and Metro President will be chosen. The Aladdin Theatre partnered

with The Bus Project, Willamette Week and Live Wire to present Metro candidates to a packed audience last month, and you convenient, mail-in ballot was sent out on Friday, April 30. You might not have cared who would be ASPSU president, but the folks on your May ballot will be using up a lot of your tax dollars.

## On Jan. 15, 2010,

President Nicolas Sarkozy signed off on the highest award France can bestow upon a non-French Citizen, the French Legion of Honor, to Amos J. Almeida. A ceremony was held in Missouri Veteran's Home, where Almeida currently resides. Almeida was featured in The Spectator ["Rendezvous With Destiny," June 2009], and that article was included along with Almeida's military discharge papers

and proof of other medals awarded during WWII in a package sent to the French Government to petition for the medal, for "Excellent civil or military conduct delivered," to the Republic of France. Almeida was a paratrooper in the 101st Airborne Division during Operation Overlord. Amos Almeida is the grandfather of current Spectator writer Xander Almeida.

*The Portland Spectator accepts letters to the editor and commentaries from students, faculty and staff at Portland State University. Please limit your letters to 300 words.*

April 23

## Dear Editor,

I was saddened to see the Spectator accept the conservative meme that health care is unconstitutional so uncritically. Apparently, "if I don't like it, it has to be against the law." Any reasonable constitutional scholar would laugh this out of court.

According to Article I, Congress has the right to both provide for the general welfare and regulate commerce among the many states. You seem to be aware of this, but don't understand how that gives Congress the right to "[reform] the health care system to force citizens to buy a private product." It's... because they have the right to regulate commerce! Just like forcing people to not buy something: making drugs illegal stems from Commerce Clause jurisprudence. Mandatory purchase or non-purchase is pretty self-evidently a form of regulation, and unfortunately the Commerce Clause doesn't say, "... except when you're making them buy something, because that's just mean." Nor does it say, "... except when everyone has to follow the regulations, let's not go crazy!"

I understand that Commerce Clause jurisprudence is a little odd. Sometimes it gets extended a little too far, and the Supreme Court calls bullshit. Recently, they rejected the Federal Government's authority to ban guns on school grounds as just too far-fetched ("but guys, people have to buy guns!") Unfortunately for you, health care is a sixth of our economy. The scope of the regulation, or to what ends it wants to regulate commerce, is just not relevant here.

I won't get too far into the Welfare Clause. But if providing health care doesn't protect the "general welfare," then pretty much nothing does. The Constitution doesn't say a thing about the Federal Government spending money on education or mandating that children go to school, but they still do. It also doesn't say anything about Social Security, Medicare, or Medicaid, but the Welfare Clause and the Commerce Clause, for over 100 years now, have been interpreted to provide them broad authority to do stuff that they think will help people. That's what the Legislature is for.

Now stop making silly arguments and stick to criticizing the substance of the bill, instead of hoping for massive judicial intervention (Oh no! Activist judges!). That's what elections are for.

— Aaron Baker



# What Now, ASPSU?

A lack of candidates, voter turnout, and too much Elections Board gamesmanship resulted in an underwhelming culmination to student elections.



ASPSU's Elections Board exists only for a few weeks to administer ASPSU elections.

By Jonathan Miles

After five minutes of trying to keep myself awake during the “final” candidate orientation last month, I decided to head downstairs to the ASPSU office and see if anyone there would talk about the elections. A sign on the office door read, “No one inside the office is allowed to talk about individual candidates,” and that the office was a “campaign-free” zone. ASPSU President Jonathan Sanford was wrapping things up and packing his satchel when I walked in. He seemed to take the “campaign free” edict to extremes seeing as he refused to say anything to me, other than, “Hey,” and “Bye.” He’s a busy guy. Fortunately, then-ASPSU Presidential candidate and current ASPSU Legislative Affairs Director Katie Markey walked in after a meeting about university restructuring with PSU President Wim Wiewel. Markey was also careful not to talk specifics about her own campaign, but she was less reticent than Sanford. When asked why she hadn’t put up any campaign posters yet, she replied, “I’m waiting for the E-Board to tell me when I can do stuff.” After our brief conversation, I decided to see if anything interesting was happening back at the orientation room.

Would-be senators and future candidates for the Student Fee Committee were turning in paperwork and having their mug shots taken for the voter pamphlet. Maria Escobar, a member of the Elections Board (E-Board), was also there. When I told her what Markey said about waiting for word from the E-Board, Escobar told me that Markey was allowed to start campaigning

right away, and that, “if she would’ve read the bylaws, then she would know.” I asked Escobar why the elections process was being shortened to only a few weeks—a little less than half of last year’s timeline—and she said it was an effort to increase voter turnout. ASPSU Senator and member of the E-Board Jacob Voegelé also chimed in, echoing that they were operating as per the bylaws.

I asked Escobar why the list of candidates on the E-Board Web site was so scant. As of press time, only Markey was officially listed for the office of ASPSU President (along with running mate and current Senator Selina Poulsen), and I questioned Escobar about rumors that current Student Fee Committee member Jil Heimensen might also be running. Escobar said that the reason Heimensen wasn’t listed had to do with her failure to meet the filing deadline. Heimensen, she explained, would be running as a “write-in” candidate; meaning that she would have her name on the ballot, but cannot run a paper campaign of any kind, including e-mail, social media, etc. And, as per E-Board bylaws, Heimensen could not participate in the first presidential debate—all this, because she failed to list a running mate on her application form,

a requirement of the bylaws. These are the same bylaws the E-Board used to temporarily disqualify Heimensen from the election, and ignored when extending the elections period with short notice.

During a clandestinely rescheduled meeting of the E-Board in the sub-basement of Smith, Chair Debra Porta refused to take responsibility for what was then an uncontested election in many respects. “Our role is to get out the vote,” she admitted, but also rebounded with, “the fact that there is only one presidential slate is not due to our outreach.” Meanwhile, Judicial Board (J-Board) Chair Brad Vehafric was upstairs in the ASPSU office waiting to hold a meeting regarding Heimensen being removed from the election by Porta’s E-Board. The J-Board would later overturn

## E-Board Bylaws

“The Elections Board shall determine the exact dates of said elections and shall announce such dates for approval by a majority vote of the ASPSU Senate *by week six* of the preceding winter term.”

**"The problem isn't with what ASPSU does for students down in Salem and up in Wiewel's office. The problem is that nobody knows about it."**

that decision and reinstate Heimensen's candidacy. Between no permissible campaign, disqualification and terrible coverage from the Vanguard, Heimensen's candidacy was on seismic ground.

During a chat last month, Heimensen was critical of this year's E-board, saying that, "Their interpretation of the ASPSU guidelines is questionable," and their refusal to let Heimensen run a campaign "cuts off student voice." It might be appropriate, and

common, to attack the E-board for failing to bring the elections to the students by not publicizing enough, and sticking so hard to their rules that the elections almost didn't happen. But, the onus of student involvement cannot be placed on a committee, like the E-Board, that exists for only a handful of weeks. ■

## Students For Unity Delivers

SFU has a winning formula getting attention—and they're doing it on a shoestring. There's a lesson here for ASPSU.

By Jonathan Miles

Last month, I attended an event underwritten by Students For Unity (SFU), one of the many groups who received a massive cut to next year's budget. SFU managed to pack room 328 in the Smith Building in spite of robust competition from the Earth Week festival and warm sun out in the park blocks. How did they get some 70 people to show up for a lecture about politics, when ASPSU struggles to get people to show up to their office? Free food and live music. Yes, these things cost money, but SFU's budget can hardly compare to the megalith of our student government, who received a five percent increase in their budget for next year. With their minimal funds, SFU managed a live performance from local hip-hop artist Mic Crenshaw and a free buffet from a North Portland restaurant (it was delicious, by the way).

ASPSU's accomplishments should not be downplayed or overlooked. After all, they registered thousands of students during the last Oregon state election, and can take credit for keeping our tuition from skyrocketing and saving our state grants from being slashed. The problem isn't with what ASPSU does for students down in Salem and up in President Wiewel's office.

The problem is that nobody knows about it. If students knew that the ASPSU president appoints and manages the staff that represents our interests (i.e. affordable school) to state and national legislators, then students might give half a damn. Unfortunately, with a turnout of only 701 voting students and a president who was elected by only 342 votes, it's hard to argue that student participation is anything but pathetic. President-Elect Katie Markey promises to paint little footprints that lead to her office and wheel a couch around on campus. But will that really accomplish anything? Hopefully the story



The Spectator tells next year will be about how PSU student government emerged from under their rock to introduce themselves to students. In the meantime, here's a look at the people who will be representing your interests whether you know it or not. ■



Students For Unity can really turn out a crowd—even on a sunny day.

Selina Poulsen is roommates with Maria Escobar, a member of the E-Board, who used to be roommates with Katie Markey. Also, Christopher Proudfoot—Katie Markey's political mentor and potential future cabinet member—is roommates with Debra Porta, E-Board chair.

# Did You KNOW?

This year's voter turnout:

Total legitimate votes: 701 Number of times someone opened the ballot on Banweb, regardless of completion: over 1,000

Last year's elections process lasted over six weeks. This year, the entire process was completed in four weeks.

In total, 800 students voted in last year's ASPSU election (2009-10). This year saw only 701 voters, making it the lowest turnout since 1998 when only 421 students voted. Jonathan Sanford, 2009-10 ASPSU president, was elected with 347 out of 800 votes—39 percent. Markey was elected with 432 out of 701 votes—62 percent.

## Votes Are In. Promises Are Out.

With the lowest voter turnout since 1998, Portland State has elected ASPSU leaders for next year. Here is a conversation with the newly-elected president and vice president of ASPSU.

By Danielle Kulczyk

### Your new ASPSU President, Katie Markey

*Editor's note: This conversation has been edited for clarity and brevity.*

**Spectator:** Congratulations on your win. Now what?

Katie Markey: I have a lot of ideas. The first thing that Selina and I would like to do is start the hiring process. From there, once we have a staff that's hired and we get closer to June, we want to change around the office. When you walk in right now, you've got that big, huge desk that, if you were in a wheelchair, you can't really see the person there and it's not very accessible, so we want to get rid of it. We're going to start right away with work. We've been talking about getting these footprints from all the doors, and so we want to start that process because you have to go through all of the bureau-

cratic steps—that's kind of going to be our first hurrah.

**S:** What are you hoping to accomplish during your year?

KM: A lot. We're going to be down in Salem a lot—Salem is going to be my second home. But we also don't want to just focus off of campus, we want to make sure we have a presence on campus. We have that food pantry right now, it's in our conference room, and I'd really like it out. I know that if I was someone who had to

use it, I would feel a little demoralized to have to come in and interrupt a meeting to grab food. We're working on trying to find space and get it more advertised. And then we want to work on safer prayer spaces. But at the same time, we don't want to say, 'We're going to do this, this and this,' and kind of over-capacitate ourselves so that we don't have room for anything else. [We want to] go to students and say, 'What do you want?'

*So how do we fix the problem of low voter turnout and apathetic students?*

"The E-Board could have done more, [but] Exec Staff could have done a whole lot more. Senate could have done more," Markey explained after the election, "It needs to be a group effort."



*"I don't like making promises, just because I don't want to tell you I'm going to do something for you and not follow through."*

### ASPSU President-elect Katie Markey

**S:** Do you have a timeline for accomplishing these things?

KM: There is actually no timeline for anything right now. If restructuring happens, it will most likely happen in this session, so winter and spring term. But, for like the food pantry, we need a space and PSU has very little open, available space.

**S:** What are you guys going to do to be a student government?

KM: I currently think there is a lot of in-cohesiveness [sic] through our student government. I'm pretty sure there are members of the Senate who can't name members of the [Student Fee Committee]. Something we want to do right away is a retreat where people get to know each other, do team-building. Something I want to do within the staff itself is limit campaigns. If you're working on 12 campaigns, you're so consumed with them you're not paying attention to what students want. Someone had this idea for a mobile living room, [where] you go out there, sit and students can say, 'These are my issues with you guys.' I feel that doesn't happen enough and that's why students are so disheartened, and why voter turnout has been so low.

**S:** What is your presence going to be like in Salem?

KM: This year, as legislative affairs [director], I was down there a couple times for

the supplemental session, [but] next year is a full session. Restructuring is going to be the main thing; the Oregon Opportunity Grant is going to be another huge issue.

**S:** How are you going to be accessible?

KM: I really want a communications director who talks to the media on a regular

*The Spectator has featured a regular section called "What Have You Done For Me Lately, ASPSU?" in every issue since October 2009, as well as invited ASPSU members to write to us. This month is the start of our new section called, "What Now, ASPSU?"*

basis, who is putting out a newsletter or something of the sorts, regularly updating our website. For media, I would love to see like a little section in every publication, like, 'What has ASPSU done for you right now?' I don't know if that would really actually happen, but it would be awesome if it did.

**S:** What can you promise the student body?

KM: I don't like making promises, just because I don't want to tell you I'm going to do something for you and not follow through. The one promise I can make is



ASPSU President-elect Katie Markey wants to build teamwork within the organization next year. Photo by Clara Rodriguez

that I will work as hard as I can. I will make sure I'm listening and available if you need to find me and talk to me about something.

**S:** Fast-forward to June of next year when your term is wrapping up. What are you going to be most excited about accomplishing, and what would be your biggest disappointments?

KM: I think my biggest personal accomplishment will be graduating, but for student government, it's laying the groundwork. I really feel like there is a fundamental problem in ASPSU right now. There's no cohesiveness, there's no teamwork; nobody knows who the hell we are. This past year

*"Our SFC group was pretty tight, but you know, I'm not really in their group. If they said, 'Hey Jil, want to be in the SFC next year?' I'd be like, 'OK.' but I don't know. I'm just hurt because I feel that the whole thing was kind of skewed in their direction."*

Former ASPSU Presidential candidate  
and SFC member Jil Heimensen

Jil Heimensen

*"I think a lot of money spent in ASPSU is wasted on the legislative people, because that's kind of what you pay the [OSA] for and I don't know why you have to be paying twice, so to speak."*

there have been some incredibly intelligent, hard-working people in that office, who have gone above and beyond in accomplishing stuff for students, but who knows about them? My biggest disappointment would be the exact opposite—if people are still like, 'ASPSU? What? We have one?'

## Your new ASPSU Vice President, Selina Poulsen

*Editor's note: This conversation has been edited for clarity and brevity.*

**Spectator:** Congratulations. Now what?

Selina Poulsen: A lot of brain-picking. I've got to definitely look at people who've held the positions before me. Figure out what the history has been for my position, and where I can go from there.

**S:** What does your timeline look like?

SP: Once I take office [June 1], I'll probably try to take that and start making plans because I have to start gearing up for Senate coming in the fall, and VOTE! and all that.

**S:** What are you hoping to accomplish?

SP: I am hoping to make the Senate more prestigious. Coming up as a senator into VP I've kind of had a nice, unique look at

it. I know that sometimes senators feel like it's a waste of their time to go to a two-hour meeting once a week, and so I'm trying to hopefully make that time feel less wasteful.

**S:** How are you going to work to make this a student government that represents PSU?

SP: I'm a rah-rah person, so I'll bring some spirit in as well as just get out there and talk to students—try to lure students in. To make sure students are represented, that people are still meeting with admin but that those aren't close-door, secret meetings that students never hear about.

**S:** How are you going to be available?

SP: If we have a mobile living room I'll be out in Parkway North just chillin' on a couch, trying to get someone to come talk to me.

**S:** How are you going to get the word out about what you guys are doing?

SP: Just a lot of talking. As well as having a more up-to-date Web site. Ours is a little lagging right now because we're missing the exec person that usually handles that. Trying to hit the social [media] websites. And going to events, because you end up talking to people and they end up learning. And you can have fun.

**S:** What do you want to say to the entire student body about the year to come?

SP: I'm not making any promises, but I have a lot of high hopes for the year to come. Some of those hopes are extremely high, and student involvement will be necessary in order to make those possible. [For example,] keeping tuition low. We need students to fight for it. I think students need to get in and get down and dirty with whatever they're passionate about. Hopefully we can empower students.

**S:** Fast-forward to June of next year when your term is wrapping up. What are you going to be most excited about accomplishing, and what would be your biggest disappointments?

SP: I think they're the same thing. I'd be the most proud of having student voice in restructuring and student empowerment through the food pantry. Those are both really near and dear to my heart, but maybe not to my administration, so if those didn't end up being the high-level priorities, or we didn't see them accomplished in our year to come, it might be most devastating.

Jil Heimensen

*"I'll definitely be paying attention. I want them to do a good job, I wish the best for them."*

# Rebuilding a Reputation

David Gertson, former PSU student athlete, struggles to regain his reputation and credibility following his 2009 arrest on charges of sexual misconduct.

By Jeff Wickizer

On Monday March 29, 2010, David Gertson sat in a Multnomah County courtroom as Deputy District Attorney Lindsey dropped four of the six charges filed against him. All of the charges relating to alleged sexual misconduct were dropped due to a lack of evidence and a lack of cooperation by the accusers. Gertson plead guilty to harassment and resisting arrest during his early morning altercation with PSU Campus Public Safety (CPSO) officers on November 22 in Blumel Hall.

While that day marked the culmination of court proceedings and legal wrangling for Gertson, it is only the beginning of his quest to restore his reputation. Four months after the incident, Gertson is still picking up the pieces and trying to make sense of what has happened. Accepting responsibility for one's actions shows a level of maturity and growth, and Gertson acknowledges his mistakes. "I shouldn't have been drinking, and should not have gotten so intoxicated," said Gertson. "I feel bad that I made those girls feel uncomfortable," he added. David admitted to hugging one of the women, but insists there was no other physical contact with the other two.

When it comes to PSU Public Safety Officers David Barker and Greg Marks, who were the arresting officers, Gertson admits to arguing and resisting their commands. "I resisted arrest, I was intoxicated and did not know what was going on." He added, "I wrote a letter of apology to both of them, but they did not want to hear what I had to say." In fact, it appears nobody has wanted to listen to what Gertson has had to say since his arrest. CPSO officers have contin-



David Gertson, embattled PSU student athlete

*The Encyclopedia of American Law states:* "A person is guilty of aggravated assault if he or she attempts to cause serious bodily injury to another or causes such injury purposely, knowingly, or recklessly under circumstances manifesting extreme indifference to the value of human life; or attempts to cause or purposely or knowingly causes bodily injury to another with a deadly weapon." The Oregon University System uses a similar definition, as they are required to comply with state and local laws on aggravated assault.

*According to the Media Law Resource Center: "Libel and slander are legal claims for false statements of fact about a person that are printed, broadcast, spoken or otherwise communicated to others. The false statement must be defamatory, meaning that it actually harms the reputation of the other person, as opposed to being merely insulting or offensive."*

ued their silence, and repeated requests for comment by the Spectator have gone unanswered.

Gertson was arrested and charged on two counts of forcible fondling, one count of simple assault, and one count of trespassing based on the testimony of three women who were occupants in the same residence hall as Gertson. Two additional charges of aggravated assault and simple assault were added stemming from the altercation with campus public safety during his arrest. On the surface, this is appalling, unacceptable behavior for any student attending PSU, let alone one living among students on campus. However, it is important to remember that these were merely initial charges, stemming from two officers who had just been through a physical altercation with Gertson.

As a former police officer, I can tell you that a common practice for officers is to gather information on a particular allegation, make an arrest, and then formalize all the charges for the initial report. Furthermore, it is common for the District Attorney's office to either add or dismiss charges at their discretion based on reports and witness testimony. In Gertson's circumstance, it might be fair to question how unbiased the charges were against him. According to the CPSO report on the incident, officers charged him with aggravated assault after Officer Marks accidentally cut his hand from a bottle that was in Gertson's backpack. Gertson did not

take the bottle out of his backpack or use it as a weapon. Even though intoxicated, it appears Gertson did not attempt to assault either of the officers. Perhaps it was a case of "throw it all on the wall and see what sticks."

The sad and unfortunate truth is that David Gertson was found guilty of these alleged crimes the minute handcuffs were placed on him; he was not afforded due process or his day in court before the trampling of his character began. This is often the case for men or women accused of any sexual misconduct. The three accusers were afforded anonymity, which should be the case, to protect them from frivolous and unwarranted attacks on their character while the case is being investigated. It appears that these same concerns and standards do not apply to someone, with no criminal history, who is accused of a crime.

## The Fallout

Three days after Gertson's arrest, Dementro Powell, the area coordinator for Student Housing, sent out an e-mail informing all residents of Blumel Hall about Gertson's situation. Apparently trying to defuse rumors about the incident, Powell wrote, "I want to make sure that you all know that despite of [sic] what you may have heard thus far, there has not been any reports stating that David sexually assaulted anyone in terms of rape." Powell continued with the assertion that

Gertson was, "touching the ladies involved without consent." Powell's e-mail borders on libel, since no determination of guilt had yet been found. And, he had absolutely no reason to mention rape, which only confused and inflamed the situation. Students and fellow teammates who later saw Gertson in the library would make remarks to him, such as, "You're a rapist."

It is important to remember that none of these allegations were determined to be fact by a court of law when Gertson was arrested, nor three days later when Powell published this e-mail defaming Gertson to his entire housing unit. Powell did get one thing correct in his mass e-mail to students: "I want everyone to understand that the people involved are the victims in this situation and if you are aware as to who the people are in this incident, I ask that you keep their identities anonymous." This apparently did not include Gertson. Powell has not responded to The Spectator as to why he wrote this e-mail or who authorized its release.

A few weeks after Gertson's arrest he had a hearing with school officials, which would determine whether he was going to remain a student of PSU and its football program. The secret meeting, consisting of members who are largely unknown, questioned Gertson who was without any guidance or legal representation. "I read an apology letter addressed to President Wiewel and the entire school for my



actions on that evening,” said Gertson. “I tried to apologize to Officer Marks, but he would not acknowledge me.” Gertson could sense that the hearing was not really an inquiry to discover the truth, but rather a formality, “It seemed like they were going through the motions and had already made up their mind.” Prior to any court proceedings or validation of the accusations against Gertson, PSU officials determined that he was to be expelled from school, the football program and student housing for the remainder of the school year. The earliest he could apply for reinstatement is fall term 2010. “I wasn’t surprised at their decision,”

Code of Conduct and University Housing Contract contain vague clauses that allow the university the freedom to level any discipline they feel works at the time. The office of the Dean of Students (DOS) and Residence Housing Life refused to comment on Gertson’s dismissal from school, which resulted in the loss of his scholarship and housing, stating that to do so would violate student confidentiality. When asked who hears these types of cases, the Assistant to the Assistant Dean of Students Kelley O’Loughlin responded by saying it is “determined on a case-by-case basis.” Corey Ray, the Director of Housing and Residence Life,

The fact that Gertson recognized the importance of this valuable education, without the insistence of the court, shows he has given thought to what errors in judgment he made.

Gertson acknowledges that he made mistakes, and he has learned from them. Hopefully, PSU administrators, CPSO and fellow students can learn from theirs. Accusations of sexual misconduct are not to be taken lightly, and when claims of this nature are made against someone, it is important to make sure that they are legitimate, investigated thoroughly, and the accused is afforded the right to fair and impartial due process.

No matter what the outcome would have been, Gertson was branded a criminal by the university upon his arrest. The university administration, football program, and the Campus Public Safety Office did not want to hear or accept his apologies. It appears as though Gertson is the only one involved in this ordeal to have taken ownership and learned something from this incident. As Gertson said himself, “I hope students can learn from my situation and realize how easy it is to lose everything. Allegations, whether or not they are true, can ruin your life,” adding, “Nobody is going to be there to help you get back what you lost.” ■



Blumel Hall is not actually as scary as it looks.  
Photo by Nate Garvison

added Gertson, “There were only a couple of people in that hearing that appeared interested in what I had to say, for most of them I was already guilty.” This snap judgment left him scrambling to continue his education. He was required to borrow money from family to enroll at Portland Community College only a few weeks before classes were to begin. I asked Gertson if he would come back to PSU now that charges had been dropped. He responded, “I thought about it but I will always be looked at as criminal at that school.”

Unlike the legal system and the rest of society, the university does not need to provide due process to students. Students are not innocent until proven guilty; rather innocence or guilt is determined based on the type of incident. In fact, the Student

said, “Keep in mind that like the Dean of Students office, we cannot share specific student information.”

### Taking Ownership

Feeling a sense of responsibility to correct the immature behavior he displayed to fellow female students, Gertson voluntarily signed up for twenty hours of community service at the Women’s Resource Center at Portland Community College. Gertson said, “I wanted to show everyone that I realize that I made some mistakes and I wanted to be pro-active in fixing those mistakes.”

# Oregon's Gubernatorial Election – GOP Primary

Let political columnist Xander Almeida introduce you to the candidates.

By Xander Almeida

Ah, May. This is how I really know it's spring, when the climate is as indecisive about the weather as the voters are about the upcoming primary election. You may be wondering, "Should I vote? It's also happy hour, and it will cost me a stamp to vote. Also, PSU's 'Get Out The Vote' drive has come under some controversy, so I'm not sure I want to drop it off with them. Mmm...happy hour." Well, let me tell you, potential voters—this year is exciting! Why? Because our governor is term limited, which means it's a WIDE open primary! So saddle up, and let me tell you 'bout some candidates.

## Oregon's Gubernatorial Election – GOP Primary

### Allen Alley

"We've increased our spending by 49% in the last four years! Is anything really 49% better from four years ago?" That's a question Allen Alley, co-founder and former CEO of PixelWorks, asks during his stumping on the campaign trail. A woman (in Portland, go figure) once replied to Alley's question that there were 49% more bike paths. I think light rail might be up there, as well. But that's probably about it.

I've watched Alley's campaign, from the kick-off in April of last year at a Portland electric vehicle dealership, through the last nine miles of his 400 mile trek across Oregon, to his taking on John Kitzhaber and Bill Bradbury at Portland State for an environmental debate. His speaking abilities have gone from squeaky engineer to more confident engineer speaking to an engineer's convention (which is really apparent when he shares the stage with the charisma powerhouse known as Chris Dudley). But, Alley has consistently wiped the stage with the

power of ideas, thoughts, and knowledge.

What's better? Not a trace of social conservatism. Alley is purely an economics guy who is over the notion of creating government jobs, and has pushed frequently for government to foster an environment where the private sector can create careers. Alley has yet to duck out of a debate where things might not go his way. He may not have steered any votes his way from the Sierra Club constituency he spoke to, which he likened to being "a Christian in the coliseum," but he still went. Alley's two main opponents, Dudley and John Lim, ducked out of both debates.

It would be remiss of me not to mention that Alley's PixelWorks nearly tanked back in the day from a bad business decision, and GOP rival Ames Curtwright criticized Alley's donation of \$4000 to the DNC in 2004 (which campaigner John Vinson claims was a protest donation against President Bush's policies). However, Alley has been back on his feet ever since. My personal endorsement for a solid fiscal Republican, and a Republican that has a damn good chance at swaying the independents who outnumber all parties, is Mr. Allen Alley.

### Chris Dudley

It's really hard not to pay attention to Dudley when he walks into a room. He's a giant of a man, with a smile that puts stars in the sky to shame. He's a former pro basketball player and spent a number of seasons, including the last few of his career, as a Portland Trail Blazer.



Allen Alley just walked into the governors race.

It's also hard not to like Chris Dudley. He's charismatic, he's incredibly charming and the man has stage presence to rival the old Western charms of Kitzhaber. He has an obvious passion for the state, and is one of the many, who because of a recent turn of events, has been driven to politics out of a sense of obligation. The GOP has also really taken a liking to him, because of his obvious charms and star power, and having taken in more donation money and landed larger endorsements than his other two competitive Republican rivals.

However, the stark difference between Dudley and his rivals is the lack of a cohesive plan, which has been quite apparent during his debates with Alley and Lim (while making his other two opponents, Sizemore and Curtwright look foolish and radical). Dudley is quite broad and general in terms of what he will do for the state. He published a five point plan for Oregon, and his campaign does mimic the Alley campaign quite a bit as far as ideas, though lacking a lot of specifics.

One thing that does stand out on Dudley's platform, which he addressed to me during the Dorchester Convention in March, was his plan to take down the Oregon Liquor Control Commission (OLCC). His plan would essentially dismantle the Commission and put liquor sales out of the state's hands and into the private market, bringing down the price of alcoholic beverages, eliminating some state jobs and even possibly allowing

liquor sales to be done in grocery stores, the way more civilized states like California do. This would be a huge cost saver for the state. The tax the OLCC levies against alcohol would be lessened (not eliminated) and put into a fund to fight alcoholism for those seeking help. Not a bad trade off, when you think about it.

Overall, Dudley would be a solid candidate, but he'd need to show he's able to talk to everyone, and his record of ducking out of debates is disappointing.

### John Lim

John Lim, a Korean immigrant and former State Representative and Senator, is the only candidate running to have held elected office before. He uses this frequently, having been re-elected in Multnomah County a number of times, as a reason he should be given the nomination. Also, that because he's older than Dudley and Alley, he is by default wiser. Oh, also because he's Asian he can get more Asian money for Oregon. Also, you shouldn't vote for Dudley because he's tall, and he's also "smaller" than Alley. Also, also, he has been told he "speak(s) better than California governor." What I'm really trying to say here is that John Lim would really be the most amusing candidate we could hope for.

Lim stands as one of the only few pro-life candidates for the GOP (along with Sizemore and Curtright). He, like the rest of the candidates, is stalwartly against Measures 66 and 67, and has vowed to put sunset clauses in both of them.

While it is wonderful to see a minority in the gubernatorial debate (the only one

between both the Democrats and Republicans), Lim falls short on a number of ideas. His humor, by far, outshines Alley and Dudley combined, and thus his ability to bring both parties together might be improved, but humor can only get you so far.

### Bill Sizemore

Ah, Sizemore. The very mention of the name brings poisonous foam to the mouths of liberals. This alone is amusing as hell. Sizemore is a "voted no on gay marriage and always will," pro-life, pro-gun candidate (which is akin to allowing abortion doctors to be trained, certified, and in hospitals before telling them they can't operate). Sizemore's sole mission, it seems, is to free the state from the public employee union's stranglehold. Which is to say, it's not much of a platform to run on, considering the other candidates have more diplomatic and realistic reforms to PERS than just bleeding it dry and laughing while holding the bloody knife.

Sizemore is also a former Republican gubernatorial nominee who gave the Democrats the single largest landslide victory in state history. He faces charges for racketeering and felony tax evasion. He's threatening to run as a third party candidate (illegal under state law, which prohibits a candidate who sought a registered party's nomination from running after they lose).

Sizemore often brings up valid points, but when you're crazy 80% of the time, it doesn't often matter to people.

### Ames Curtright

I didn't really want to mention Curtright. He has said, "I believe everything revolves

around God" and my personal favorite racist comment of, "We can send (illegal immigrant criminals) back down to Mexico where they have tacos they can eat."

Not only does this statement assume all illegal immigrants are Mexican (they're not, with estimates that only 54% are of Hispanic origin), but it also assumes that the taco carts in Portland are not worth the while of Hispanics, which is grossly insulting because they're pretty damn good, and also manned by Latinos.

## Congressional District 1

### Rob Cornilles

Cornilles is a businessman who is running for Representative David Wu's seat. Traditionally, this has been for the honor of being the sacrificial lamb. However, Wu's seat is no longer listed as "secure" and the two mainstream candidates running for the Republican nomination have a great contrast. Cornilles knows enough to mention Reagan at least once a debate, but also offers a realistic approach of conservatism in Washington. He's honest enough to say he would bring back money from Washington, D.C. to Oregon (known amusingly as Pork Barrel), while being strongly against the concepts of bailing out industry that failed in business and acknowledging a strong commitment to Afghanistan to prevent leaving them high and dry, as Reagan did.

Cornilles is also a very likeable guy and has the potential to attract moderate Democrats to his side. Cornilles is sort of

cuddly like that. Either way you split it, he is a solid Republican, on the more moderate side of things, while leaning right when it comes to fiscal policy.

### John Kuzmanich

I'm going to get this out of the way...Kuzmanich is kind of an ass in debates and looks like Rahm Emanuel. But beyond that he is a man full of fiery passion, who started off by going to the Town Hall meetings held by Rep. Wu to confront him, and eventually turned to running against Wu when he felt Wu no longer listened to his constituents' concerns.

Kuzmanich started off with the Tea Party protests, where he said he became political for the first time, like a lot of Americans. Kuzmanich is a bit coarse and crass because he has a lot of anger. He's not in a small boat, but part of a larger movement. He also told a story of chasing down a man who stole a woman's purse and getting into a fistfight throughout the chase. He ended up catching and getting the man arrested who, as it turned out, had been burglarizing houses in the area for years. The man has a fighting spirit, but could be considered too rough for popular support in this area. But, I kind of like his spirit.

## U.S. Senate

Nobody's going to beat Sen. Ron Wyden. Ever.



# Saltzman Fights Back—Sort of

The embattled City Commissioner quietly holds his own in campaign debate

By Michael Munkvold

City Commissioner Dan Saltzman faced the top challengers for his position on the City Council on April 23 at the Portland City Club, sporting a characteristically bland, inscrutable smile as the two top-tier challengers accused him of ineffective, wasteful management of the Police Bureau, Bureau of Environmental Services, and Bureau of Fire Police Disability and Retirement.

With their criticism, challengers Mary Volm and Jesse Cornett joined a growing chorus of pundits, activists and police officers who have grown weary of the scandals that have piled up at Saltzman's feet, and sought to unseat him in the May 18 primary.

"One person's squabbling is another's democracy," Saltzman quipped.

He has contended with plenty of the former over the last year. When a Portland police officer shot and killed Aaron Campbell, an unarmed, suicidal black man, on January 29, it shredded the department's already tattered reputation. Saltzman responded with a report recommending mental health training for police officers and the use of mental health professionals in crisis situations.

This won him no friends in the mental health community, however, and further upset the Portland Police Association, who held a no-confidence vote against him last year after he advocated putting Sergeant Christopher Humphreys on administrative leave for firing beanbag rounds at a 12-year-old girl during an altercation on the MAX. Humphreys was suspended for two weeks.

For his part, Saltzman has publicly refused to talk about police matters in a debate setting.

"I'm not going to politicize police in the context of a campaign," he said in a separate interview with *The Spectator*. "I'll take the hits necessary, but I won't say anything inappropriate in terms of my job."

**"I have changed how we use force, although there are still lessons to learn, ... I feel my style is fair and honest. I act decisively."**

Of course, his opponents had plenty to say. "We should be frightened that 1,000 people in this city are licensed to take a life, and there's minimal oversight of them," said Cornett, whose friend Raymond Gwerder was shot and killed by Portland police officers in 2005. On this issue and others, he accused Saltzman of having accomplished little in his tenure as a public servant. In a separate interview with *The Spectator*, he said, "Just because you've been an elected official for 20 years, as Dan has, doesn't mean you're going to be a bold leader. Because he hasn't."

Volm criticized Saltzman for mishandling public funds, accusing him of

spending \$11.2 million on "private projects" instead of putting more money into improving the sewer system. "When we take our eye off that ball, we are failing Portland."

Saltzman responded by touting The Portland Children's Levy, The Domestic Violence Center, and Anti-Child Pornography Task Force. "Tell me how any of those are bad ideas," he said, a rare note of anger in his voice.

When speaking with *The Spectator*, Saltzman defended his record with the Police Bureau, even as he acknowledged it as a work in progress.

"I have changed how we use force, although there are still lessons to learn," he said. "I feel my style is fair and honest. I act decisively."

He told *The Spectator* that his main priority for the Portland police is to help lead the Bureau past its present troubles and improve relations with the community, in part by diversifying the police force.

"One of my goals is to increase diversity of the police force, to have a police force that looks more like the community," he said. "I think we need to be better at de-escalating situations, to be better prepared to deal with mentally ill people."

In all, Saltzman answered his critics both in the debate and throughout the city with a quiet shrug.

"I would rather seek solutions than chase headlines."



# Welcome to the FEDERAL FARM

Government regulation is killing small farms under the guise of food safety laws. Here's why the Food Safety and Modernization Act will be the end of traditional farming.

By Megan Kimmelshue

The pace of modern society and the values it espouses, make it a challenge for Americans to find joy in plowing their yard for a garden or roosting hens. The farm is a place “out there, somewhere,” and our chicken and eggs come from the supermarket’s cold shelf. The downside to this new way of life is the disconnection between humans and the land that we cultivated for centuries. It calls to my mind the recent episode of Jamie Oliver’s “Food Revolution,” in which he held up a potato and asked a group of West Virginia kindergarteners what it was. The look of confusion on their faces was telling.

America has a rich and productive agricultural history. Prior to the Industrial Revolution, foods were grown and produced on family farms, and processing was, according to writer Sally Fallon, a “cottage industry.” Preserving, fermenting, canning and salting were done each year as part of a community ritual. Eating with the seasons was the norm—if you didn’t preserve it well before the winter set in, a quick trip to Safeway was out of the question. Even our founding fathers, like Washington and Jefferson, considered themselves planters first. Growing food, both plant and animal-based, was an absolute necessity and a central cog in the wheel of life.

But by the 1850s, times were changing. Groundbreaking inventions that improved efficiency were taking hold and allowing farmers and growers to get more done in shorter time while increasing their harvest and stock. Vast plots of land were cleared for one farm, as opposed to their predecessors, who had stuck to a couple dozen acres. People realized that food, produced with these new machines, could be a lucrative business. A century later, the post WWII industrial machine was brought to agriculture in an effort to feed everybody cheaply. Which brings us to 2010 when the Center for Disease Control reports about 5,000 food-related deaths annually. A small farms movement has begun to grow as a means to combat the rise in unsafe foods that are being produced and sold by agri-business.

Even though the “slow food movement” is quickly growing—with Community Supported Agriculture and Co-ops—small farmers have become a novelty. And now, a new bill threatens to force their extinction. This year, the Senate will vote on Bill S.510, titled “The FDA Food Safety and Modernization Act.” There are several components to this bill, but what is important to know is that it requires the Secretary of Agriculture to institute “regulations on sanitary food





The Act not only imposes new restrictions on industrial food practices, but also on local farmers and food producers regardless of the size of their production.

transportation practices,” and, “track and trace raw agricultural commodities.” The act not only imposes new restrictions on industrial food practices, but also on local farmers and food producers regardless of the size of their production.

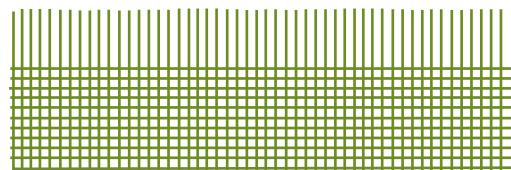
The FDA and USDA also have the support of the president. In March 2009, after making a political commitment to work towards food safety, President Obama stated that “protecting the safety of our food and drugs is one of the most fundamental responsibilities our government has,” and established the President’s Food Safety Working Group. The Working Group recommended a new public-health focused approach to food safety based on three core principles: “prioritizing prevention, strengthening surveillance and enforcement, and improving response and recovery.” A call to Illinois Senator Richard Durbin’s office revealed that this bill could be passing the senate “any time.”

Recently, 97 national organizations came together with the Farm and Ranch Freedom Alliance to compose a letter voicing their concern for the bill—including the Oregon Sustainable Agriculture Land Trust, Oregon Rural Action, and Northwest Farmer to Farmer Exchange. Luckily, Montana Senator Jon Tester has led the way in pushing for amendments that will exempt small, local processing facilities from the bill’s analysis and controls. Tom Maurer, a Pennsylvania agricultural soil consultant and former farmer, suggests that the bill misses the mark on food safety: “If the government was really serious about upgrading food safety,” he

writes, “it would look at who produces our food and the real reason for the problem. There are four companies that slaughter and process 80 percent of our beef. So why not write legislation that targets the large producers.”

The issue that weighs heavy on small producer’s minds is the FDA and USDA’s implementation of Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point plans (HACCP) instead of literal inspections on processing plants. HACCP is an international standard applied through the World Trade Organization. It relies on a small number of inspectors, who are already stretched thin. Instead, the emphasis is placed on paperwork, requiring farm or plant operators to design and plan protocols for safety. The Farm and Ranch Freedom Alliance argues in the letter that, “although the theory of preventative controls is a good one for large, complex facilities, the federal agencies’ implementation has already proven to be an overwhelming burden for a number of small, regional meat processors across the country.” Besides the added bureaucracy, the Farm and Ranch Freedom Alliance is worried about the FDA’s attitude toward small operations. “Given the agency’s track record,” the letter continues, “it is likely that the regulations will discriminate against small, organic and diversified farms.”

If this legislation passes, will it contribute to the economic collapse of rural America and the local farmer? Perhaps not. But given the track record of the government to manage its programs and place the needs of the people against the wants of industry, it is a step in the wrong direction. ■



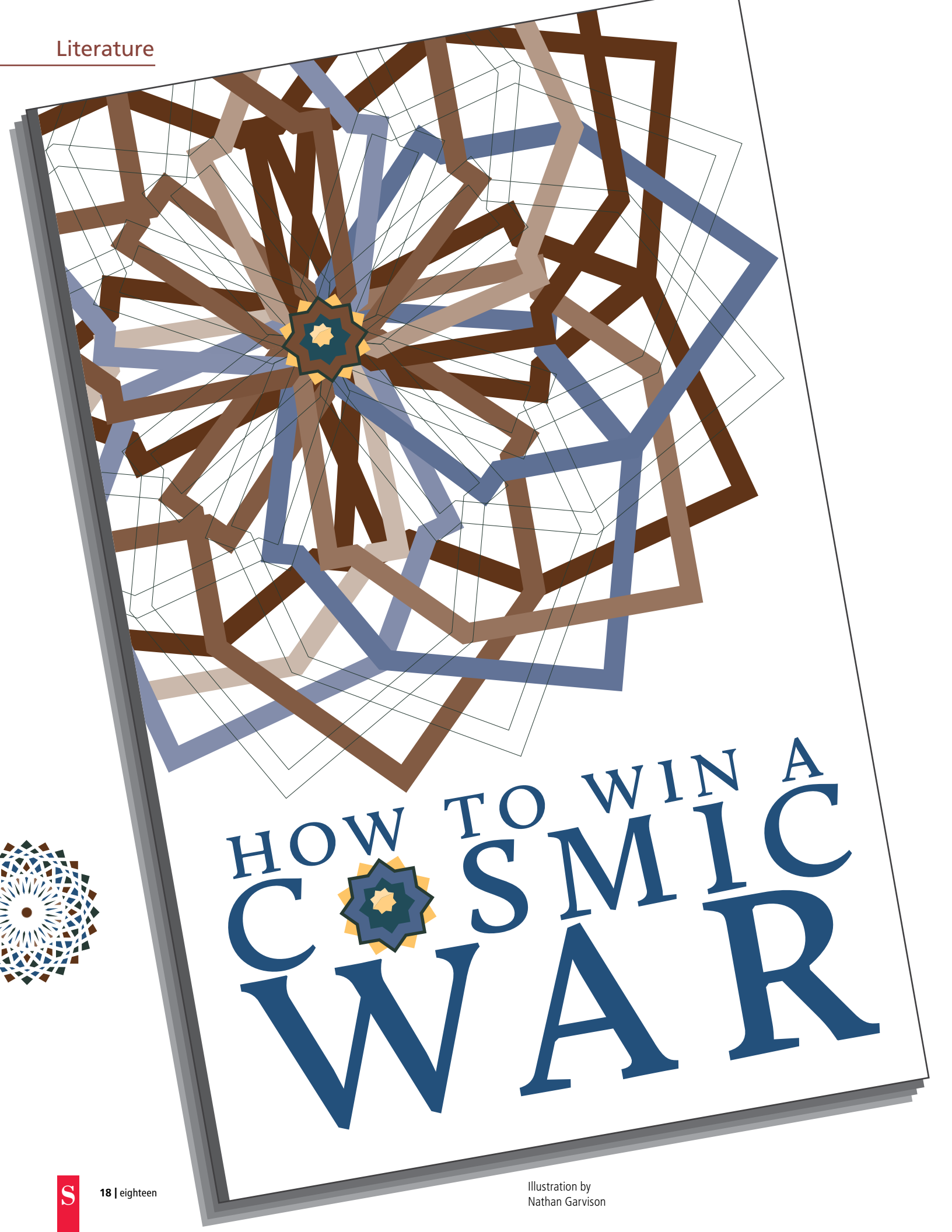
The FDA and USDA are gearing up for this bill to pass. According to a statement given before the U.S. Senate, the “FDA is eager to further the development of this modern system. Working with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and our partners

at USDA, as well with industry, consumers, states, localities, and other key stakeholders, we are working to establish basic standards for preventive controls. This system will make our overall approach and philosophy to food safety more consistent across government.”



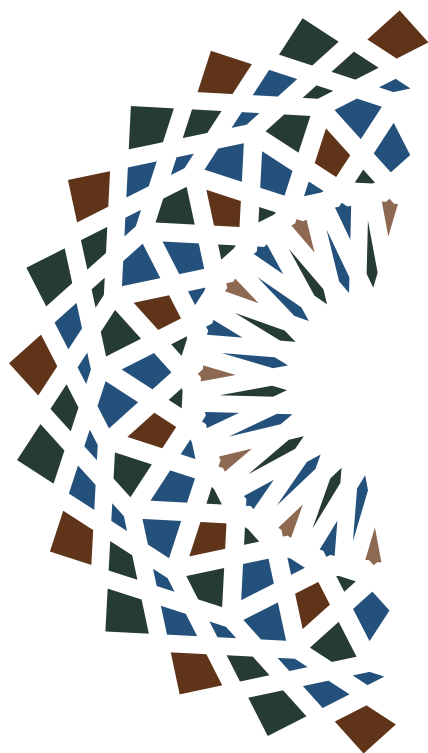
Photos courtesy of Oregon State University





# HOW TO WIN A COSMIC WAR

Illustration by  
Nathan Garvison



# War on Terror: Over

Dr. Reza Aslan declares an end to the cosmic war against global jihadists as he tracks the history of religious warfare in his book "How to Win a Cosmic War."

By Erica Charves

Dr. Reza Aslan looks every bit like a youthful professor or GQ model, instead of a writer giving a lecture to a conference of teachers and intercultural businesses; he is dressed in a black pin-stripped suit with a matching mauve collared shirt and tie. A smile brightens his face as he jokes, strolls across the lecture platform and addresses the audience. In the midst of his speaking tour this month after his lecture in Spokane, Wash., Aslan granted an interview with *The Spectator* to talk about his latest paperback release of *How to Win a Cosmic War: God Globalization and the end of the War on Terror*.

In *How to Win a Cosmic War*, Aslan wanted to outline religious radicalism and terrorism in Christianity, Judaism and Islam, while focusing on how various groups use

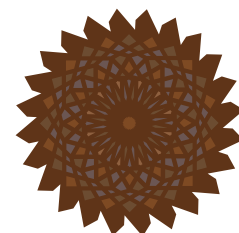
Islam to justify their actions. He describes the need to strip conflicts of religious contexts, because a war with cosmic and religious consequences cannot be lost, nor will people back down from religious wars.

Such a dry, confusing topic becomes enthralling as Aslan chooses a narrative form of storytelling to unveil the world of Islamic fundamentalism. In fact, when asked how a professor of creative writing came to produce such serious non-fiction, Aslan stated, "Creative non-fiction is similar [to fiction]; it's all about storytelling—only, the images are more tethered to reality." He gave advice for students in essay writing, "If you can tell the information in form of a short story, not only will people react better, they will remember it. If you wrap the issue

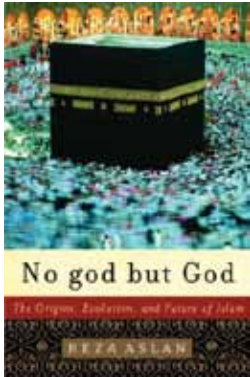
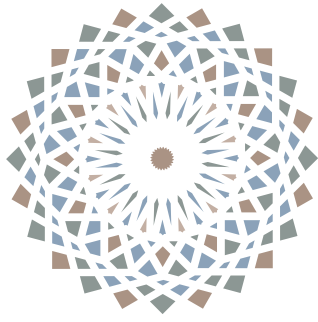
in small universal stories you communicate with more depth."

His point remains that the conflicts against the Taliban in Afghanistan, and the ever-newsworthy Palestinian and Israeli conflicts should be stripped of their religious content. From the American political view of Hamas and Hezbollah, or the Islamic Republic of Iran, Aslan addresses it all with the art of a descriptive narrative, a dash of humor and a dose of his opinion regarding possible solutions to current military engagements and the ongoing rise of terrorism in the face of the vast majority of reasonable Muslims across the world.

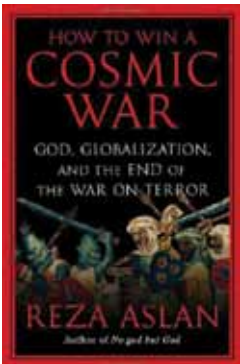
He argues that governments in the Middle East use the plight of Palestinians as a rallying cry for "us versus them" mentality while ignoring the actual suffering of refugees or







In his first book *No god but God*, published in 2005, Aslan writes an extensive history of Islam refuting the claim that Islam is a violent or terrorist religion



*How to Win a Cosmic War* was recently published in paperback as *Beyond Fundamentalism: Confronting Religious Extremism in the Age of Globalization*.

residents of Gaza. For example, he mentions a giant billboard seen on a recent trip to Iran, depicting an infamous and tragic picture of a Palestinian man holding his dying 10-year-old son with the caption “Yesterday Palestine,” next to a revolting picture from Abu Ghraib showing an Iraqi man in his underwear, hooded with electrodes on his hands. Beneath the second picture it said “Today Iraq.” The country of Iran and its politicians have not been historically in favor of either Palestinians, Hamas or Iraq. Yet these images are being fashioned in a way to promote hate for America, Israel and the West. In this way, Aslan establishes that the Israel and Palestine conflict is the biggest threat to U.S. security.

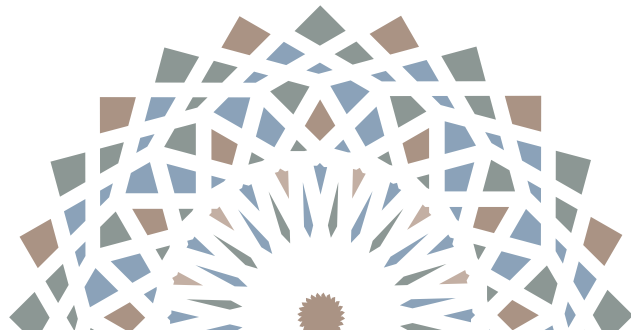
The epilogue tells more about us as Americans than perhaps any other country. He relates, “Undoubtedly, the single most significant factor in allowing American Muslims to comfortably reconcile their faith and traditions with the realities of American life is the core American belief that there

need be no conflict between one’s religious and national identity.” When asked what makes this possible in our democracy, Aslan’s answer said a good deal about not only American ideals, but those of other western nations and Muslims across the globe. “Frankly, the historical account of this country states that it was founded by religious outcasts who refused to allow religion of a national church to dictate their lives. The founding moments [of America] involved a forced sense of religious pluralism that the government should encourage religion to take part in public realms such as politics and economy. While it gives certain religious groups such as Christian Evangelists enormous political influence, it also allows people of different faiths to express themselves. This gives American Muslims recognition and a feeling of belonging.” ■

Aslan has landed guest lectures on everything from *The Daily Show* with John Stewart to CNN for frequent political commentary; he has written for *The New York Times*, *The Boston Globe*, and *The Chicago Tribune* in addition to regular commentary regarding Iran in online magazine *The Daily Beast*. He is currently on sabbatical from his full-time job as a professor of creative writing at the University of California Riverside.



Erica Charves gets to meet with one of her top ten favorite people, Reza Aslan



Poster Design: Alyx Jolivet



# You Have to Start Somewhere

Social Art meets Diversity in Action to create an innovative campaign for diversity in the PSU Art Department.

By Laura Jones

It's obvious when you look around the Art Department that there is a striking lack of diversity in student body, in faculty, and most importantly in what we are studying. World art class is more like Western art with the conspicuous absence of artists of color from non-Western countries.

It's a daunting task to reach out to students who might not see themselves as art majors to begin with, but you have to start somewhere, and that's what Professor Jen Delos Reyes of the Art Department is doing.

In an interview with Delos Reyes last Friday, we talked about her background in the MFA Contemporary Art and Social Practice program. The Social Practice program is a unique field of study where artists learn ways of creating art that encourages interaction with the social environment. This has led her to being a part of uncovering the issues surrounding diversity at PSU, and working to address them effectively.

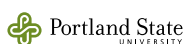
Delos Reyes and colleague Professor Harrell Fletcher were struck by the lack of diversity here at PSU and elsewhere in the arts. They decided it needed to be addressed, so they started the Art Department Diversity Committee



They can't teach  
you everything in  
business school.



[WWW.DIVERSITY.PDX.EDU](http://WWW.DIVERSITY.PDX.EDU)



Poster Design: Laura Jones

"Especially as artists, we need to understand diverse perspectives to even be able to hope to communicate anything that will be of value to our contemporary culture."

—Professor Jen Delos Reyes, PSU Department of Art

Poster Design: Angelica Mendoza

**Design is...**  
**86% White**  
**6% Asian**  
**4% Latino**  
**\_\_% Latina?**

The poster exhibition, entitled **Art Majors & Minors: Questions about Diversity** will be shown in the MK Gallery May 6-28, with an opening reception from 4:00-6:00 p.m., and the annual Art Department Diversity Committee roundtable discussion will take place at 12:00 p.m. on May 27. All students are welcome to attend.

(ADDC). This is a committee dedicated to more than just racial diversity, but diversity in all areas: socio-economic background, gender, sexual orientation —everything.

In 2008, ADDC held their first round table discussion, bringing together art students and art faculty to talk about the lack of diversity in the arts. They had a great discussion, where students from very diverse backgrounds came together to discuss their feelings and share what it was like for them. And you know what they came up with? Talking about diversity issues is hard, even for touchy-feely artists. It's hard to address the issues and communicate them effectively, and to create awareness. Talking about race is hard, so the next time around, they decided to ask graphic artists because we're good at communicating. They asked us to create posters directed toward high school students that would encourage diversity and offer tips on being a successful minority artist. Three graphic designers, Alyx Jolivet, Angelica Mendoza, and myself participated in the creation of these poster campaigns, which will be put up in Portland-area public schools.

Delos Reyes believes that the best way of "making art more accessible" is "showing that it is a world that you can be a part of." She's found that the best way to encourage people is by showing them that it is possible. The intention is that putting this message out there will open up new possibilities for students. The posters investigate ways to bring up issues of diversity with young people and attempts to provoke a dialogue that will encourage change.

Delos Reyes works in the Art Department as a De Priest Visiting Scholar; her job is to increase diversity communication and outreach. She teaches in the MFA Contemporary Art and Social Practice Program, working at PSU for two years. She was also appointed to PSU's Diversity Action Council and has been serving with them for one year. ■





# Taxed to Death

The sorry state of Uncle Sam's pocket book. Here's how he can fix it.

By Molly Shove

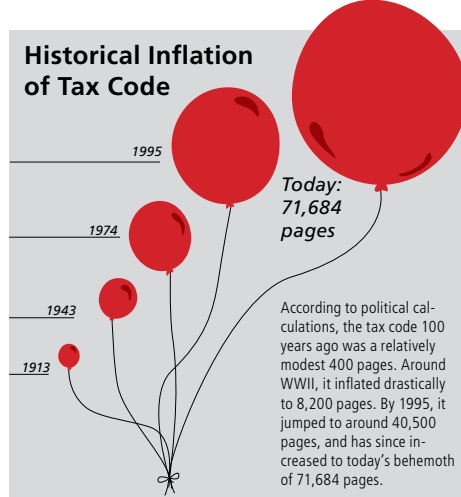
If there is one common hardship that will bring us together, it's that of filing taxes. The entire process is hideous: swimming through the arduous legal language, watching the precious bit of income you planned to spend on textbooks slide out of your paycheck, or reading articles about senior officials spending \$50,000 to replace the leather seating in their jets. It's enough to make even the most patriotic faint of heart.

However, we have to grit our teeth and pay up. After all, we as Americans like things, such as roads, national defense and Social Security. We also realize that these are paid for by taxes. There are many things the government could do to make paying them more pleasant. Here are four essential principals that, if applied faithfully, could bring our tax situation back to reality.

**Simplify:** The entire federal tax code is 70,000 pages long. It makes the new health care law look like a flimsy pamphlet. That's not including state, county or city taxes, which add new layers of complexity to the mess. The cause of this federal tax monstrosity is Congress. Every time they pass an important or large bill, they tend to slide in at least one tax exemption to coax some interest group or another to vote for them and/or a new tax to raise money for whatever they happen to be doing. The benefactors of this are the two-thirds of U.S. corporations who, according to the Government Accountability Office, paid no federal income taxes from 1998 through 2005. The people who end up suffering from this are the people who can't afford a top of the line expert to look for tax loopholes. This has spiraled out of hand, and it's time for some brave people to hack it down to a manageable size.

**Delegate:** The Feds and the State need to get together, have a heart to heart conversation, and decide who is going to pay for what. The federal government often

imposes unfunded mandates on the states; mandates which they can't afford, and force states to either cut services or raise taxes. In some cases, such as the Americans With Disabilities Act (which requires business owners to make their buildings available to disabled customers without reimbursement),



unfunded mandates are used to force people to do the right thing. However, it's also a way for the federal government to push the cost of their programs onto state and local governments. According to the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities, a local government advocacy group, special education costs from court-funded mandates rise 5 to 6 percent a year, forcing local governments to pay for ever-increasing federal mandates. This type of situation further muddles who should pay what to where and how much.

**Restructure:** Taxes will never be fun, and there is no way to make them entirely fair. However, there are many ways to move the tax system in that direction. One idea is to make sure the people who benefit most from a service, or the primary architects of a societal problem, are taxed for what they receive and/or create. For example, the government could tax Monsanto, or other pesticide

producers, and put the proceeds towards water purification projects. Another possibility is taxing producers of high fructose corn syrup and cigarette companies to pay for many of our national health care costs. Measure 68 (in your May election ballots) would allow schools to sell bonds for revenue instead of making a new tax. Bonds allow citizens to invest in the services they find valuable. This both gives them a voice, and means one less amendment to our exorbitant tax code.

**Re-prioritize:** We as Americans need to understand that our debt needs to be paid off, which means we need to both raise taxes and cut services. I know this sounds as fun as getting a root canal with a spoon, but the government (just like the average citizen), can't constantly spend more money than it has for decades at a time. We need to face the reality that many of our entitlements are no longer relevant to our lifestyles or sustainable in our budget. Nothing is more telling of this than Social Security, which, for the first time this year, is expected to draw more revenue than it produces. It was implemented in 1935, when the life expectancy was 59.9 for men and 63.9 for woman (for combined races, according to the CDC) and the earliest retirement age was 62. In 2010, life expectancy is 77.7, while we can still retire as early as 62. While it may seem nicer to give people long retirements, it's proving to be much less fiscally sustainable. We need to look at the largest pieces of the budget (entitlements and military) and find ways to trim it down. One way of doing this would be to raise the retirement age. It would save a lot of money in Social Security costs, and encourage people to privately save for retirement. If we make adjustments like these to costly programs, our taxes won't be as exorbitantly high. ■



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